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VILNIUS FOR MINSK

THE FOLLOWING STATE 033932 DTD 02APR08 SENT ACTION  
USOSCE INFO ORG FOR SECURITY CO OP IN EUR COLLECTIVE  
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO 02APR08

QUOTE:

UNCLAS STATE 033932

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OSCE](#) [PREL](#) [BK](#)

SUBJECT: OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL: RESPONSE TO OSCE HOM TO  
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, AMB. DAVIDSON

11. Post is authorized to present the following statement at  
the April 3, 2008 Permanent Council meeting in Vienna.

12. Begin text:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome back to the Permanent Council, Ambassador Davidson,  
and thank you for an excellent report. The United States  
regrets that little has changed since your last report and  
that political tensions within the country appear  
undiminished.

The United States is particularly concerned over the apparent  
determination of some politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
to undermine state-level institutions at every opportunity  
and to advance their nationalist policy, both in rhetoric and  
in practice.

The statements and actions of Republika Srpska officials and  
government bodies, in the past few months in particular, are  
cause for concern. Entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have  
no right to secede under the Dayton Peace Accords and Bosnian  
Constitution. At the same time, unilateral calls for the  
abolition of entities also are unacceptable and anti-Dayton.

We also are concerned by the state of freedom of expression  
for members of the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina,  
particularly in the Republika Srpska, where there have been  
allegations of violations of such freedom and harassment of  
NGOs. We hope that the OSCE will soon send its media freedom  
representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina to look into these  
issues.

The good news, however, is that the OSCE Mission continues to  
make meaningful contributions to the reform process despite  
the current political climate in the country.

We value the Mission,s efforts, for example, to promote  
better governance at the municipal level, and we support the  
Mission,s increasing focus on helping certain struggling  
municipalities address high unemployment and promote outside  
investment. We similarly appreciate the assistance the  
Mission continues to provide to the parliaments in Bosnia and  
Herzegovina.

The Mission,s field offices are one of its key advantages over other international bodies. We recognize the important work the Mission is doing to monitor court proceedings throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the Mission,s role in supporting the drafting of a Justice Sector Reform Strategy.

There are many more Mission activities we could commend, as we have done in the past, including the vital work the Mission is doing with respect to rule of law, the return of refugees and displaced persons, arms reduction and war crimes monitoring.

The United States would also like to commend you and your staff for your excellent management of the mission. You have consolidated operations, found efficiencies, prioritized and rationalized. Please be assured that we will continue to support you in your efforts to promote budgetary discipline and streamlining activities while ensuring that the important work of the mission is carried out.

In sum, Ambassador Davidson, your dedicated staff is making a real difference in helping Bosnia and Herzegovina address the many challenges it faces. But the Mission,s efforts can take the country only so far along its reform path. At the end of the day, political leaders must work with each other and find compromise for the country to walk proudly down the path toward Euro-Atlantic integration.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

End text.

RICE

UNQUOTE: RICE